

Project Report: Reimagining the face of Colecção Básica

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Special Thanks

There are many people that helped me to realise this project and that I am greatly indebted to.

First off I would like to thank my parents, for their support and patience during this stressful period.

To my father, for having a great book collection.

To my advisor, whose knowledge and criticism helped shaped the project into what it is.

Finally, I would like to thank my eldest brother for whom I wouldn't be here completing this project if it wasn't for him.

Abstract

The purpose of this report is to understand the design process of creating a book collection, including the creation of a series identity as well as an individual book identity. In order to do so, this study will be presented in theoretical/practical structure.

The theoretical part will discuss the historical context of the book covers, as well as general information regarding the designing of book covers. Following the historical context, I will discuss two existing studies related to the subject, the evolution of the cover design of Penguin Books, and the evolution of the cover design of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*.

The practical part of this report focuses on the redesign of the paperback book collection, Coleção Básica and documents its development with photographic documentation of the development. The final product of this collection consists of a mock-up of one of the titles from the collection.

Keywords: book collection, book cover design, illustration, editorial design

Resumo

Este relatório serve para relatar o processo de criação de uma coleção de livros de bolso desde o conceito até a forma física. Contudo, será apresentado com uma estrutura teórico-prática.

Para a parte teórica, será abordado o contexto histórico dos livros de bolso como também as condições em que os designs dos mesmos livros serão criados dentro de uma editora. A seguir, apresentarei dois exemplos de estudos já publicados na área. O primeiro exemplo foca-se na história do design dos livros da editora Penguin Books e o segundo é um estudo das capas da *Lolita* da autoria de Vladimir Nabokov.

Na componente prática, serão abordados todos os processos desenvolvidos durante o desenvolvimento da coleção de livros de bolso, incluindo documentação fotográfica. O produto final desta parte prática consiste de um mono de um dos exemplares da coleção.

Palavras-chave: coleção de livros de bolso, design de capas de livros, ilustração, design editorial

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Introduction

I had the idea for this project while I was clearing a bookshelf at home. I found that I was more drawn to certain books than others, mainly because of the covers.

Since I was very young, I had had a habit of reading books, and from a young age, I often chose a book based on the author, title or the book cover. Considering my education as an illustrator and a designer I understand how important the appearance of a book cover can be. Knowing very well that it is not the only selling point of a book, it does make a powerful statement about the reader, as well as publisher and the author. As Knopf art director Peter Mendelsund (2013) has stated:

We designers, with our jackets, attempt to capture meaning that is not exactly consensus driven, but rather that is both true enough, that most readers won't find it a stretch to believe it. That is to say, we are trying to maximise understanding. In this sense, jacket design is a kind of interpretational utilitarianism.

Cover design is seen as a reputable profession in the design community, being a separate category for many graphic design competitions. Many design institutions have their own competitions in the field, such as AIGA, and the Art Director's Club in the US to D&A in the UK. Yet few of the standard graphic design books fail to discuss cover design, and those that do are either outdated or talk about it briefly. Although there is no foolproof way to design a great book cover, there are some guidelines that help with the cover design.

Objectives

The main objective of this project was to create an illustrated book collection. Its secondary objectives include understanding how to create a cover that reflects on the content of novel as well as the collection. Other objectives include the understanding of the book cover design process, specifically understanding technical and stylistic approaches of cover design, the meaning of the elements on and the editorial context in which they are developed. Considering that the main objective of this report includes the creation of a book collection, the report will have a theoretical and practical structure.

For the theoretical part, I researched books that discuss the historical and theoretical considerations attached to book design. Since there are very few on cover design, I will discuss two examples that focus on the aesthetic and metaphysical meaning of book covers.

The project itself will serve as an example of the book design process, where I applied some of the knowledge acquired from the research and two examples as to developing the book collection.

Report Structure

This project is divided into three parts.

The first chapter focuses on the context of book cover design, looking at the historical implication from which it emerged, its physiology and common practices used in its development, and the editorial context in which book covers are created inside a publisher.

The second chapter looks at two existing examples on book design and publishing:

Example one focuses on Penguin Books and the evolution of its book design, focusing on the art directors and designers who contributed to the innovation and reputation of the publisher and making it into one of the most recognized in the world.

Example two focuses on the difference and similarities of two collections of covers of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*. The first is a collection of covers that have been published during the 58 years of its existence in print, which is curated by Dieter E. Zimmer. The second collection focuses on the covers published in the book *Lolita, The Story of a Cover Girl*, commissioned by one of its authors, which features the work of designers and artists.

The third chapter consists of the project, starting with a short history of Coleção Básica, and how this collection inspired the developed collection, Seleção Básica. This chapter also develops the overall design process of Seleção Básica, including the research, and development of the overall look of the series. This section also includes photographs of its development, from early sketches to the final printed dummy of one of the titles.

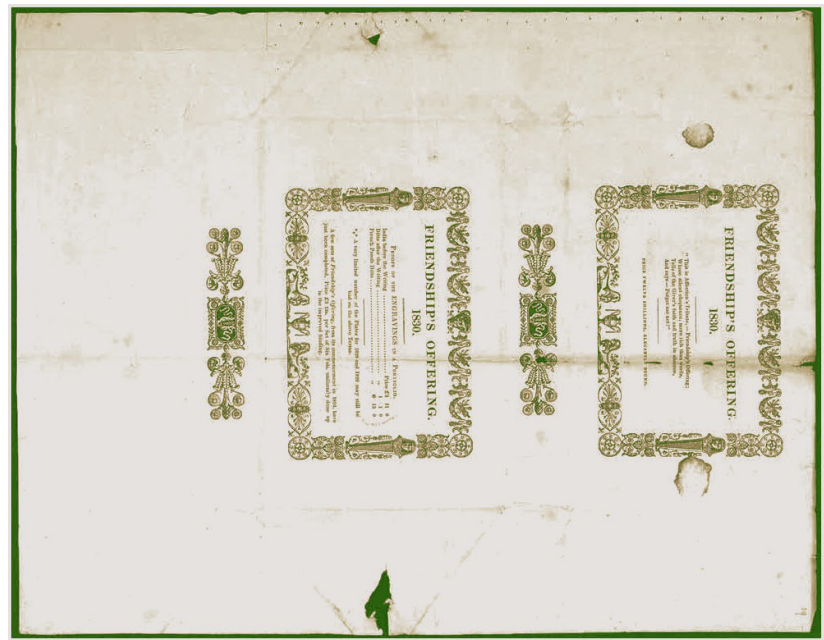


Figure 1. The earliest documented book jacket dated from 1830, Bodleian Library



Figure 2. Yellowbacks got their name from the distinct yellow covers. Like its predecessor Penny Dreadfuls, they often had sensationalist stories; 1901

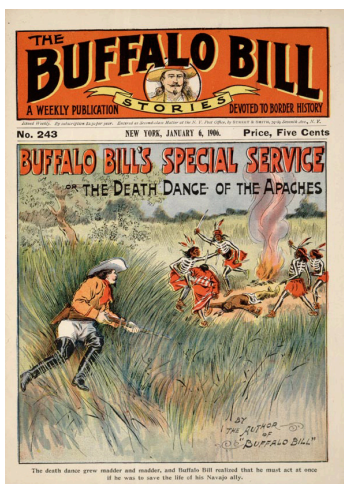


Figure 3. Dime Novels appeared around the 1860 in America. They were known as Beadles' Dime Novels and often appeared on a monthly basis; 1906

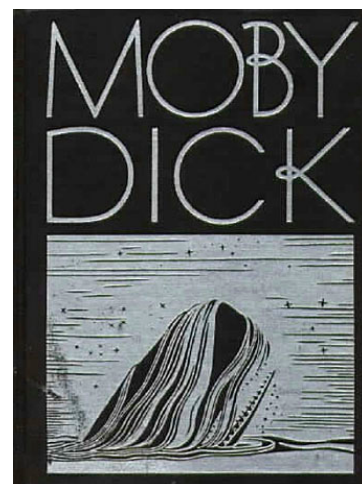


Figure 4. This cover by Rockwell Kent is a good example of early American book covers. Most book designer from the early 19th century were illustrators; 1930

Chapter 1 Context

1.1 History of the Book Cover

According to Drew and Sternberger (2005), the first documented book jackets go back to the 1820's. Since the early 19th century, new technologies and materials in printing and publishing helped speed up book manufacture which contributed to the increase in book production. Books were now bound in cheaper cloth instead of leather, but in turn needed more protection for transportation. It was in this context that dust jackets were created. During a large part of the century, they merely stated title and name of the author. Only in the 1890's did printers see the advertising potential of the dust jacket as a way to attract more customers.

Just as new technologies were developed for hardcovers, new techniques in binding along with cheaper paper production and automated book manufacture helped create softcover books. These softcovers made its way through the masses with the cheap sensationalist Penny Dreadfuls and Yellowbacks in Britain, and Dime Novels in the US. These precursors of paperbacks often had cheap illustrations on their covers and poor printing quality.

With the increase of book publishing in the 20th century, many publishers continued to use flashy illustration as a way to attract the attention of readers. In the United States, books were often issued at newsstands, often competing with newspapers and magazines for the public's attention.

The rise of the more conscious design can be attributed to the development modernist art movements in Europe. Movements like cubism, futurism, Dadaism, De Stijl and constructivism helped develop the early principles of graphic design as well as define it as a profession. These modernists brought a new approach to book cover design, with attention to typography, colour and geometrical compositions.

Many publishers embraced these ideals such as the German Albatross Press in 1933 and the British Penguin Books in 1935. Penguin Books became the first well known publisher to adopt modernist approach using a simple typographic composition and colour coding as while distributing it at a low price.

These modernist movements made their way to the United States in the 1930's through publications such as Jan Tschichold's *Die Neue Typographie* and with the migration of many designers and artists who sought to escape the repressive regimes in Europe. Most of these emigrants became teachers or set up studios which further spread these ideals.

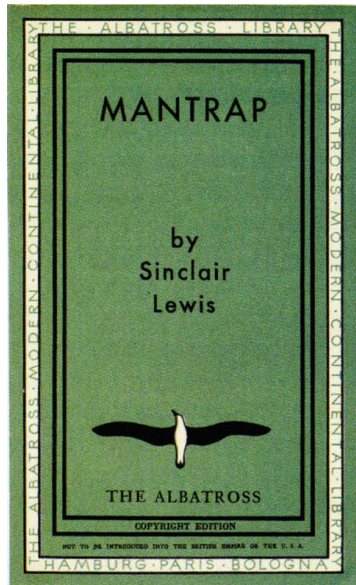


Figure 5. Albatross Press was one of the earliest paperback publishers that used a simple design. It served as a model for Penguin Books. Designed by Giovanni Mardersteig, 1932

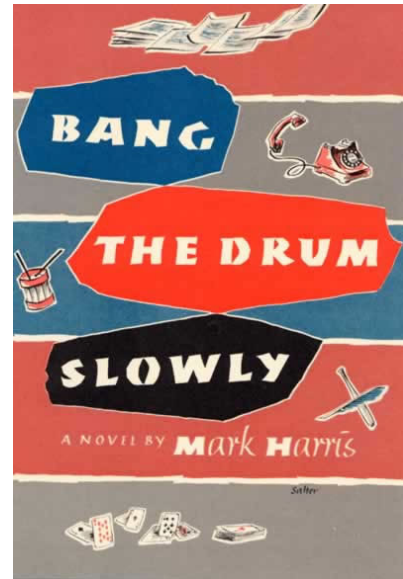


Figure 6. A book cover by George Salter a German designer who emigrated to the United States where he had a successful career as a cover designer; 1956

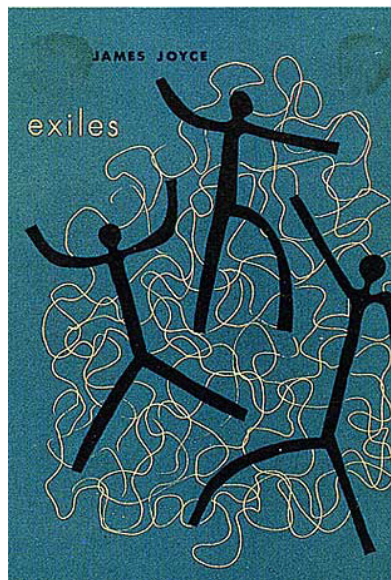


Figure 7. Cover Design by Alvin Lustig for New Directions; 1946

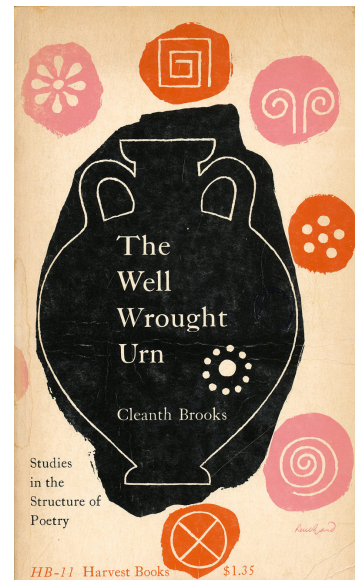


Figure 8. Cover by Paul Rand; 1947

This helped shape a new generation of cover designers in the 1940's that took care in creating formal compositions that balanced text and image while creating it in their own style. Two of the most influential designers of the decade were Paul Rand and Alvin Lustig.

Both Lustig and Rand used thoughtful typography as well as irregular geometric shapes, with bold colours in a symbolic and playful manner. To them design was an art and a means that designers could express themselves. They believed that designers should have plenty of space to explore and experiment in a way to develop personal growth.

Improvisational modernism was held with high regard since Lustig and Rand introduced it in the 1940's and remained the leading design movement until the 1960's. The freedom to experiment and explore new approaches in an almost playful manner included bright colourful "playful modifications" (Drew and Sternberger, 2005), flat shapes and elevated type to the same importance as the composition, only they adapted it as their own. Publishers started valuing designers as "good design means good business" (Drew and Sternberger, 2005) and gave them the creative liberty to develop their own style.

In the 1960's, American Modernism was replaced with the International Style. The International style, also known as the Swiss Style originated from Switzerland in the 1950's. It was reliant on rigid minimalist shapes and mathematical grids in unison with modern sans serifs typefaces. Rather than to create an expressive and personal cover, advocates sought to communicate with clarity.

In the 70's, the shift from modernism to post-modernism was caused by the founding of Push-Pin Studio, a design studio that merged a myriad of traditional graphic styles, with illustration and drawing into one graphic style.

The influence of the Push Pin led the way for the historical eclecticism of the 1970's that used historical design elements from art nouveau and art deco with pop and psychedelic graphics, as well as use expressive stylized typography.

The 80's ushered in a new approach to the eclectic design pushed by the previous decade. While this style retained the use of historic graphic elements, and mixed type, designers sought to create collages that were also chaotic narratives. With the introduction of computer technology as well as software, designers were allowed greater liberty to introduce computer graphics and create highly dense and complex compositions.

The 90's refined the postmodernist approach created in the past decade and used elements of experimentation in a less personal yet more meaningful way as to meet with the client's needs. The globalization of graphic design and publishing houses has contributed to a more eclectic design movement that is no longer defined by country.

Today publishers have a more structured design process which works in conjunction with the editors, publicists, art directors and designers to create a more meaningful book cover.

1.2 Definition

The book jacket can be defined as the protective encasing that surrounds the book. According to Haslam (2006), the book cover has two functions; to protect the book and to communicate to the reader what are its contents. It consists of a front cover, a spine and a back cover.

Anatomy

The front cover is considered the most important part of the book jacket and serves to attract the attention of a potential reader. On the front cover, it's mandatory to have the title and subtitle of the book as well as the author's name. Other elements include blurbs, quotes, the name of the series, if it is part of one, name of the publisher, and the publisher's logo.

The spine serves for cataloging purposes, and when it is at least 3,5 mm (Martin 1994), it has the author, the title and the title of the book and the publisher's logo. If it is a part of a collection, it has the number of the book in the collection. The text on the spine can run vertically either from the head to foot or foot to head. The most common practice is placing the text from head to foot so that when the book is placed with the cover facing up, the information on the spine is legible.

The back gives the reader further information regarding the book using blurbs, synopses, quotes and reviews. Sometimes it also includes a short biography about the author or other titles in the same collection. It is mandatory for the back cover to have a ISBN (International Standard Book Number) and a barcode on the back cover.

1.3 Semiotics

Mendelsund (2011) suggests the meaning of the elements on the book cover is divided into two categories: narrative facts and meta-narrative facts, both of which can be used interchangeably.

Narrative facts use a direct element from the storyline to represent the novel. Covers that use narrative facts usually portray a character, an object, a place, an event, or the time (when it takes place) of the storyline.

Meta-narrative facts use abstract elements that appear in the storyline, while not being physically present in it. These elements include tone, theme, mood or moral.

1.4 Graphic Approaches

There are three main approaches that designers use to communicate the content of the book. They are typography, photography and illustration and can be used interchangeably on the cover.

Typography

Typography is the practice of arranging letterforms in a way that they are readable. This includes typesetting typefaces, calligraphy and lettering. When setting a typeface, the designer has to take into consideration tracking, kerning and leading.

When choosing a type, designers have to take into consideration for what it is for and what you want to communicate, as it can be neutral but also expressive.

Photography

A photograph consists of an image captured by a photographic camera. After the picture is taken, it can be edited with photo-editing software or when developing the film, if an analog camera is used. One of the advantages of photography is that it creates images quickly.

Illustration

An illustration is an image that is created by an illustrator or designer through the use of a medium on a support through style and technique. One of the advantages of using illustration is that it is easy to create a surreal and fantastic image.

1.5 Technical Considerations

Paper

Haslam (2006) suggests that most paperback covers use paper between 180 to 270 grms. Papers used for covers include card, textured paper, and coated paper. The bigger the format of the book, the thicker the paper needs to be.

Production

While there are several types of printing techniques the most common in paperback publishing is offset a printing technique that uses a transfer plate and rollers to transfer ink to the support. The advantage of this printing technique is its low cost in large scale print runs.

Finish

The most common finishes include lamination, metal/tin foil, emboss and deboss, die cut, and varnish. Varnish includes spot varnish or full varnish and varies from matte to gloss. The two most common factors for choosing a finish is price and budget. Covers can also be uncoated.

Format

The general formats of paperbacks include A size (110mm x 178mm), B size (130mm x 198mm) and C size (135mm x 216mm).

1.6 Publishing Hierarchy

A publishing house, like any other business consists of several departments that work together to produce a product. During the designing process, several departments discuss and approve the book as well as the cover design, which reflects on the publisher, the intended public and the author. The principal participants in the cover design process may vary depending on the size of the company, but they generally consist of the editor, the art director, a marketing spokesman, the designer and the author.

The editor

The editor is the person in charge of finding new authors and the development of new books and series.

The art director

The art director is in charge of the overall image of the publisher, and of their books. Their job is to oversee the production, the development and layout of the books and to give feedback to the designer(s). Because of this, this position requires a person who has experience in the field.

The design department

The designer or designers are responsible for coming up with the appearance of the book, taking into consideration composition, typography, finishes and pictorial arrangement.

The marketing department

The marketing department is responsible for the promotion of the books, whether it be in catalogs, book fairs, or bookstores as a way to guarantee sales. They are responsible for doing research about the company's target audience.

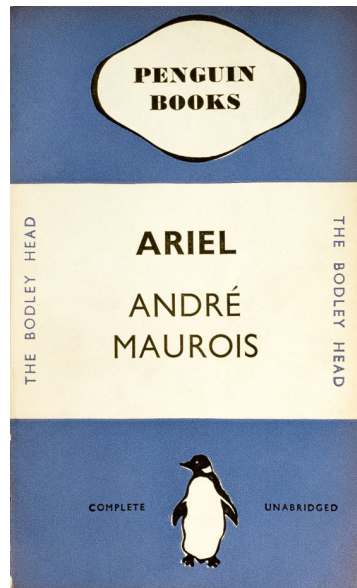


Figure 9. One of the first books published by Penguin in 1935.

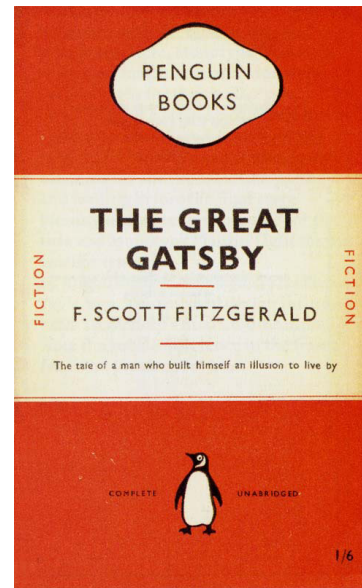


Figure 10. Jan Tschichold's revision of the horizontal grid. While the changes are subtle, they give the cover a more classical feel; circa 1949

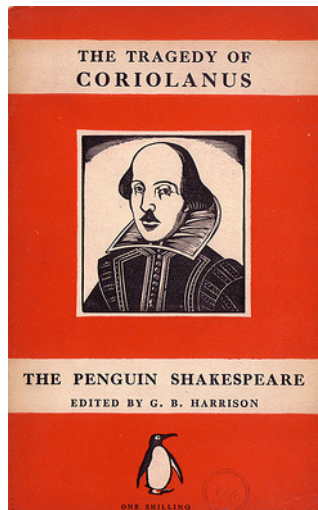


Figure 11. The first edition of the Shakespeare series; 1940

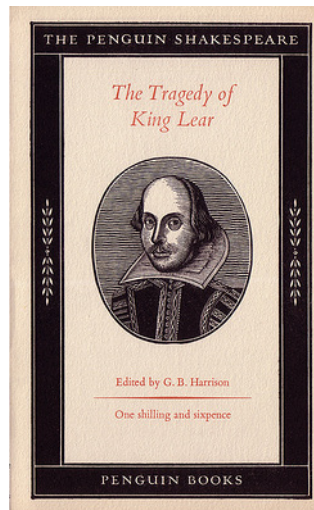


Figure 12. Tschichold's design for Shakespeare; 1951

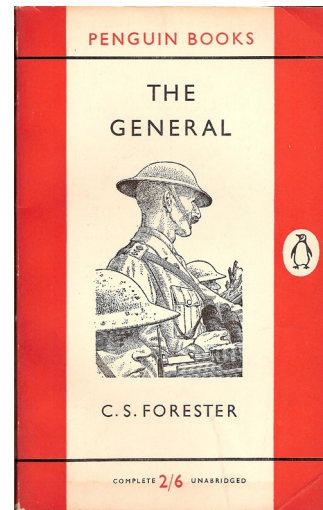


Figure 13. The vertical grid first developed by Tschichold was then perfected by Hans Schmoller; 1956

Chapter 2 Examples

2.1 Penguin Books

The Founding of the Publisher

Penguin Books got its start when Allen Lane wanted to publish quality books at a low price. In order to do so, he needed to sell 20000 copies, a high amount for the time, in order to make a profit. Penguin instantly became a well-known name in Britain and even better known for its design.

During the first 10 years, the publisher expanded its reading list and created additional series that appealed to the new needs of the readers. Successful series include, Penguin Specials a series that dealt with social and political concerns of the time, Pelicans a imprint dedicated to science and autobiography, as well as Puffin Books a children's imprint.

Design in the early years

The three horizontal stripes design developed by Allen Lane and Edward Young, were colour-coded, orange for fiction, green for crime, blue for biography and cerise for travel and adventure. In the top stripe was a bubble with the words "Penguin Books" in Bodoni Ultra Bold, while the then new Gill Sans was used for the title and author. Despite having little distinction between books, many authors found it prestigious to have their work published by Lane, since it meant being a successful and prestigious author.

After its initial success and praise, new publishers started to arise and offer resistance with illustrated covers, something that Penguin Books still lacked. Lane felt he had no choice but to call in a designer to help refresh the publisher's image.

Lane employed Jan Tschichold, an established German type designer. Jan was known for his modernist style present in his publications early in his career, but in his later years he pursued a more classic approach.

In the two years he was at the publisher, he improved the collections, instilled typographic consistency as well as redraw the Penguin logo. He revised several imprints including Fiction, Pelican, Classics, Shakespeare, Music and Poetry. Tschichold increased the printing and typographic quality through his Penguin Compositional Rules. While the changes Tschichold made at penguin were subtle they gave the publisher sophistication and greater quality.

The series that was most dramatically changed during the Tschichold era was the Shakespeare series. The first Shakespeares had a simple red and white layout, with awkwardly set typography. Tschichold created an elegant black border, with a fine woodcut illustration and the author and title set in Bembo. Great care was also used for the paper it was printed on, choosing a cream coloured and uncoated stock highly suitable for letterpress.

His successor Hans Schmoller continued to maintain a classical approach with the introduction of the vertical grid in 1951. Initially designed by Tschichold and an assistant, this layout permitted the use of an illustration or a blurb. Schmoller introduced a system of typefaces based on the author giving them a more personalized identity.

Modern Era

Between the 1960's and 1970's, there was an increase of publishers who offered the public full colour illustrated covers. In order to maintain their reputation, Penguin had to develop a more modern design for their books.

Germano Facetti was appointed art director at Penguin in 1961. Previously he worked Italy but immigrated to Britain in 1950, where he worked for the Rathbone Publisher 1956.

Facetti employed a more modern approach to the covers, using modern typefaces like Helvetica and Univers, as well as a more widespread use of photography. Rather than try to give a literal portrayal of the book, Facetti's covers captured the theme and the mood of each title.

His first job at Penguin was the redesign of the crime series. Facetti asked several designers to come up with a solution and eventually chose Romek Marber's grid. This grid consisted of a top panel that separated the title author and the publisher's identity. Intertype Standard was used for the text with "dark",

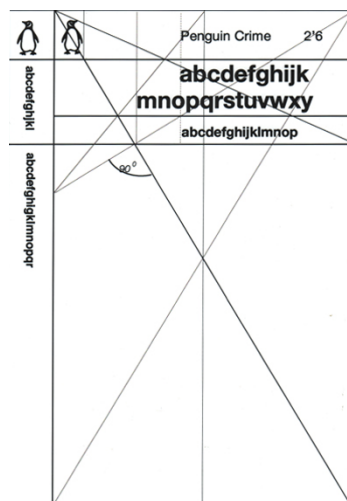


Figure 14. Marber Grid developed Romek Marber; 1961

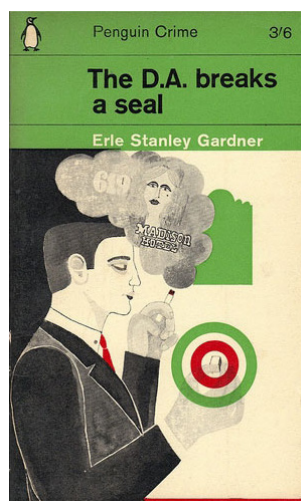


Figure 15. Marber grid in use in the crime series. Cover illustration by Alan Aldridge; 1964.



Figure 16. Facetti's Design for the Classics series; 1963

“suggestive” (Baines 2005) images were printed in black and green with the occasional red. Following the success of the Crime Series, Facetti eventually adapted the grid to both the Fiction and Pelican Imprint.

Alan Aldridge was appointed the fiction Art Editor in 1965, a position that was created to ensure more successful book covers in the fiction imprint. Believing that book covers should be more like posters, he got rid of the grids and gave the designers the freedom to design the cover however they felt like. With this approach, he shifted the focus of the book from the publisher to the book itself leaving the only unifying element of the series the Penguin Logo.



Figure 17. For Modern Poets Facetti loosely based its design on the Marber Grid. Cover image by Peter Barrett; 1970

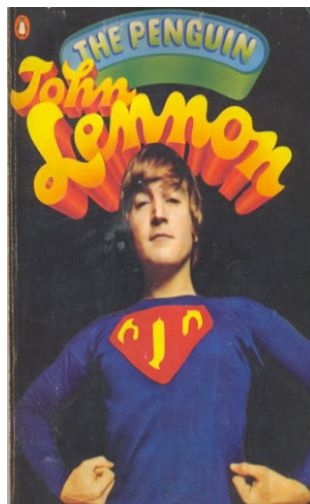


Figure 18. Cover designed by Alan Aldridge; 1966

From 1996 onward

In 1996, John Hamilton was appointed as the Art Director. Upon his arrival, he was responsible for two newly established publishing departments: Penguin General, which focuses on “literary and mass market fiction and more populist non-fiction” (Baines 2005), and Penguin Press which focuses on fiction, “serious non-fiction” (Baines 2005), Reference and Classics. His main contribution to the publisher was the removal of colour-coding on the spine, which was hurting the reputation of the publisher.

Hamilton’s first major contribution to the publisher was the design for Penguin Essentials, a small Modern Classics series. For this proposal he

commissioned well known designers and illustrators to create the book covers, leaving it the overall design of the cover up to their criteria.

Shortly after the release of Penguin Essentials, Hamilton was appointed Art Director of Penguin General, and Pascal Hutton was the Art Director Press until his departure in 2001.

His successor was Jim Stoddart whose first assignment was the redesign of the Modern Classics. Initially designed by Hutton and Jamie Keenan the proposal featured a carefully selected image with a grey panel on the bottom. The text was set in Trade Gothic, Franklin Gothic and Clarendon grouped with images that often used strong subjective imagery.

Jim Stoddart later revised Penguin Classics in 2003, using a black panel at the bottom of the cover that for the title and author. Above it, a thin white line with the words “Penguin Books” centred, along with the Penguin logo. The text was set in Futura and Mrs. Eaves and featured works of art that were considered “classics”.

The layout of Penguin Modern Classics was again revised in 2006 by Jim Stoddart. This new design featured both the title and the author in avant garde with a carefully chosen image in the background, inside a white frame.



Figure 19. Cover by street artist Banksy; 1998



Figure 20. Jim Stoddart's proposal for Penguin Classics. It's cover illustration, Chaperon Rouge by Vincent Burgeon; 2004



Figure 21. Jamie Keenan's proposal for Modern Classics; 2000

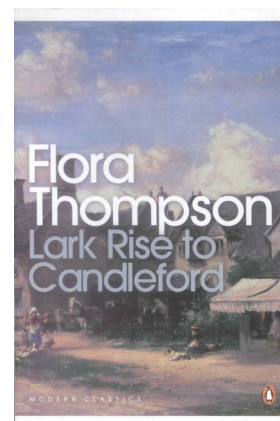


Figure 22. Stoddart's redesign of Modern Classics; 2008

Penguin great ideas

Great Ideas was the brainchild of Penguin editor Simon Wander while on a trip to Italy where he saw works by Nietzsche and Schopenhauer on sale at a kiosk. Originally the series had 20 titles, but expanded to 100 titles spanning five collections. The editor who commissioned the series proposed to Stoddart and the designer David Pearson to use antique illustrations on the covers. The identity they developed for each cover used carefully selected typography to reflect the period each title was published. David Pearson the lead designer, asked the designers Phil Baines, Catherine Dixon and Alistair Hall to develop several of the covers not only to distribute the workload but to insure more historic accuracy.

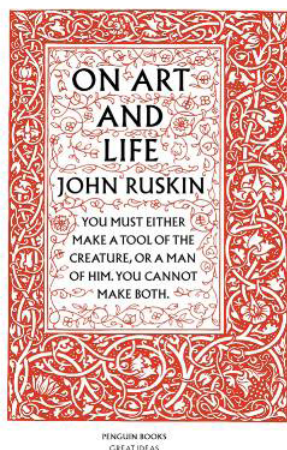


Figure 23. Volume I. Designed by David Pearson; 2004

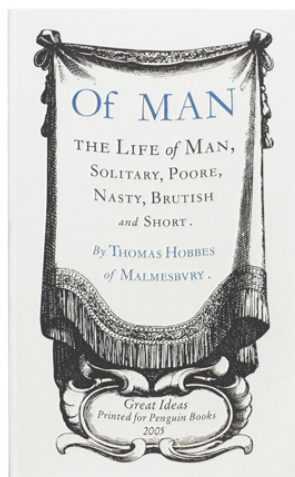


Figure 24. Volume II. Designed by Alistair Hall; 2005



Figure 25. Volume III. Designed by Phil Baines; 2008

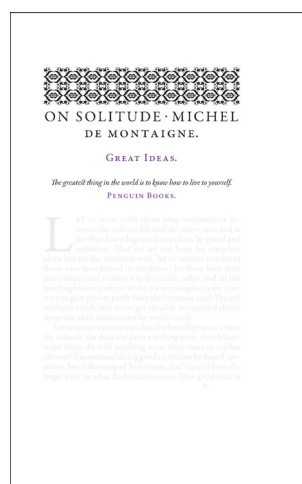


Figure 26. Volume IV. Designed by Catherine Dixon; 2010

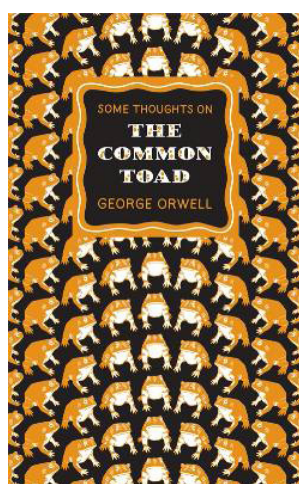


Figure 27. Volume V. Designed by David Pearson; 2010

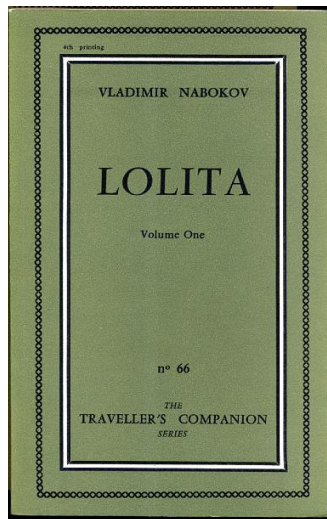


Figure 28. The first edition by Olympia Press; 1955

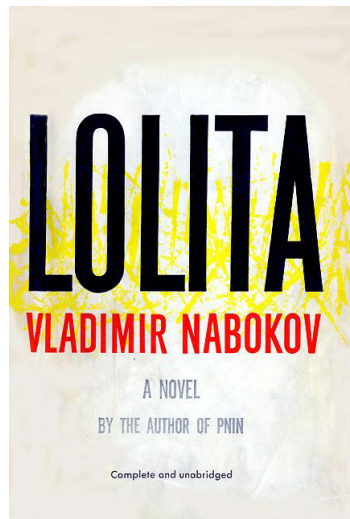


Figure 29. The first American edition published by Putnam in 1957.

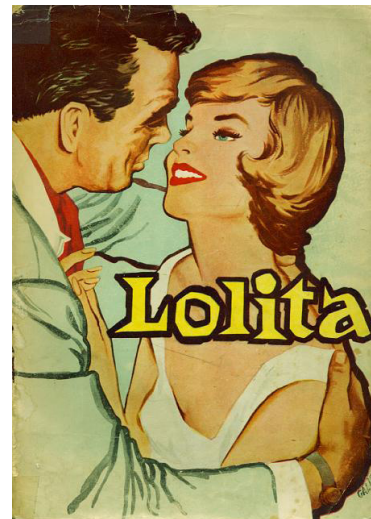


Figure 30. Turkish edition from 1959.

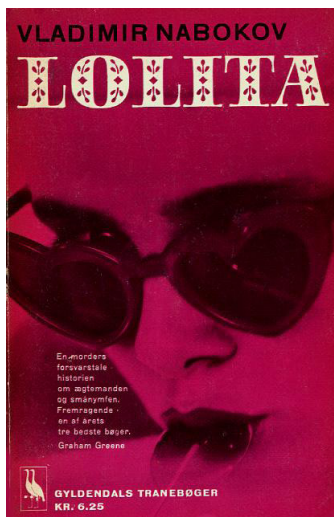


Figure 31. A Danish edition which features the Bert Stern photo; 1963

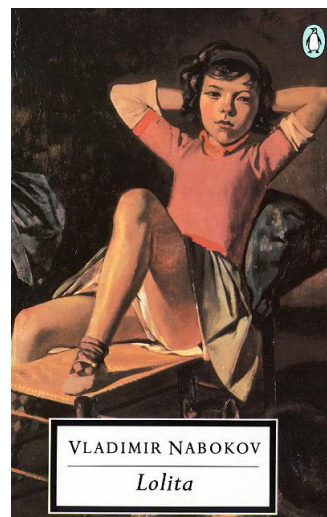


Figure 32. A Penguin edition which uses a Balthus painting; 1995

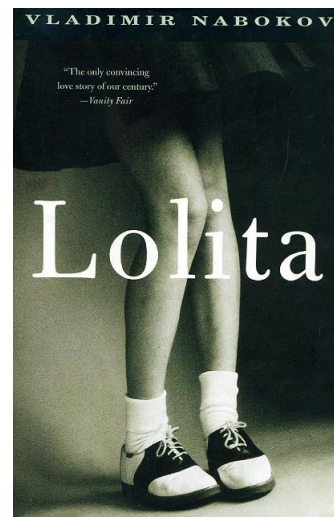


Figure 33. the highly regarded Vintage cover designed by Megan Wilson; 1997.

2.2 *Lolita* Covers

Plot and reputation

Lolita is about a middle-aged Englishman named Humbert Humbert, who moves to the United States where he meets a 12 year old Dolores Haze whom he calls Lolita and her mother Charlotte. He eventually marries Charlotte who dies in a car accident while Dolores is at camp. Shortly after Humbert collects Lolita from camp, he forces her into a sexual relationship, against her will while they travel across America. Eventually Lolita is able to escape Humbert with the help of Clare Quilty. Several years after her escape, Humbert hunts down and kills Quilty.

The novel is structured like a memoir, and is Humbert's confession for destroying Dolores' life. The novel is also a metaphor for Europe and America, with Humbert Humbert representing an old-world Europe, and Lolita representing a young and cheerful America.

In the first years of its publication, the novel was met with controversy from critics. However, it only met the bad reputation of being about a sexually experienced and sexually willing teenage girl after the 1962 movie adaptation, or rather, the publicity for the movie. This publicity featured Bert Stern's iconic photo of the actress Sue Lyon peering through heart-shaped glasses while seductively licking a lollipop. To make matters worse, the scene does not appear in either the movie or in the novel.

Published collection

Dieter E Zimmer's ongoing collection has to date, a total of 210 covers from 40 countries related to *Lolita* during its 58 years in print. This collection is available online through his website: [d-e-zimmer.de/Covering Lolita/LoCov.html](http://d-e-zimmer.de/Covering%20Lolita/LoCov.html). Considering the delicate nature of the novel, there have been several apparent tendencies in the way the cover was dealt with.

In the first decade of publication the covers were merely typographic. The first edition published by Olympia Press in 1955, uses a type only cover. This was a standard issue for their titles, as the publisher was infamous for publishing pornographic literature often deemed inappropriate for mainstream publishers. Nabokov eventually found a reputable publisher willing to publish his novel in 1958. The publisher, Putnam Press even consulted Nabokov about the cover design. After refusing several proposals, the author made his own suggestions (Zimmer 2013):

I want pure colors melting clouds, accurately drawn details, a sunburst above a receding road with the light reflected in furrows and ruts, after rain. And no girls. If we cannot find that kind of artistic and virile painting, let us settle for an immaculate

white jacket (rough texture paper instead of the usual glossy kind), with LOLITA in bold black lettering.

The publisher adopted a typographic approach similar to the one Nabokov suggested and many publishers afterwards followed suit. Zimmer (2013) argues that the reason why Nabokov was so insistent on a type-only cover was because any image based cover would ruin the reputation of the novel.

Despite that representing a girl goes against the wishes of the author, there are several reasons as to why many of the published covers that feature a depiction of Lolita poorly represent the novel.

The first is and most obvious reason as to why most of these depictions are terrible is because they do not match her description in the book. In the novel she is described having a “chestnut bob” of “curly hair”, “grey eyes”, “sooty eye-lashes”, and “red lips”. She was 12 years old when she first met Humbert, 13 when Humbert started to abuse her and 16 at the end of the novel. Many of the covers feature a blonde girl aged 16 to mid 20’s.

This inconsistency of the girls depicted on the covers is based on several factors. Often publishers commission covers more to cater to the tastes of their readers than to staying faithful to the text. Zimmer (2013) commented that, “the main criterion seems to have been how sexily Lolita should or could be portrayed”.

Another reason as to why putting a face on Lolita is ill advised is because it hinders the reader the ability to create their own image of Lolita while they read the book. (Mendelsund 2013; Zimmer 2013)

Despite countless misrepresentations of the novel, there are several that do a good job in depicting the content. The best way to represent Lolita without actually depicting her is to use paintings. They are automatically seen as a symbolic representation of her as well as a reminder of the books’ artistic merit. Nabokov was highly appreciative of art, and especially drawn to the work of Balthus. Nabokov stated in an interview “A contemporary artist who I admire, not only because he painted a Lolita-like creature is Balthus.” (Zimmer 2013).

Another highly accepted way to represent Lolita is to depict her in fragments, or focusing on body parts. It gives the reader a glimpse of the main character without giving away too much information. Although not all body parts are appropriate for representing Lolita, focusing on eyes, hands, arms or legs portray her without sexualizing her or giving a lot of information away. One of the most successful and widely appreciated Lolita covers is the 1997 Vintage edition. It features a pair of girls’ legs with the knees knocked together, in a skirt, bobby socks and saddle shoes. The position of the legs hints at a scared Lolita and indicates the time the novel takes place with her attire.

***Lolita* by designers**

The covers commissioned for the book *Lolita, the story of a Cover Girl* had the objective of creating a more accurate and in-depth portrayal of the novel than previously published covers. These covers were created by established artists, designers, illustrators and scholars. This collection has in total 80 covers which can be divided into four main groups: covers that represent Lolita, covers that represent Humbert Humbert, covers that portray mood and or themes of the novel and covers that are text-based.

Like the published collection, there is a large quantity of covers that in some way represent Lolita. While there are several that physically portray a girl, only a few of them actual put a face on the girl. Most of them physically depict her through an abstract way, with legs, feet, torsos and other body parts. However, the most interesting depictions of Lolita tend to depict her metaphorically. Many use objects that one could only assume belong to Lolita, as they represent a fragile girl that isn't sure of whether she is a girl or a woman.

The group of covers that represent Humbert also have a unique way of doing so. While a few depict him physically but several do it indirectly, like the ones that do through handwriting. These covers demonstrate his role as the narrator and the one who is confessing his crime. In general most of these covers, try to depict Humbert's obsession with Lolita and the complete control he had over her life.

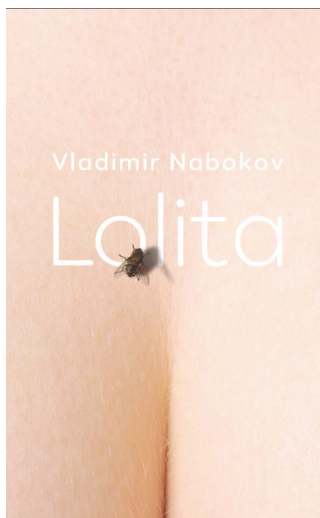


Figure 34. Cover by John Fullbrook.

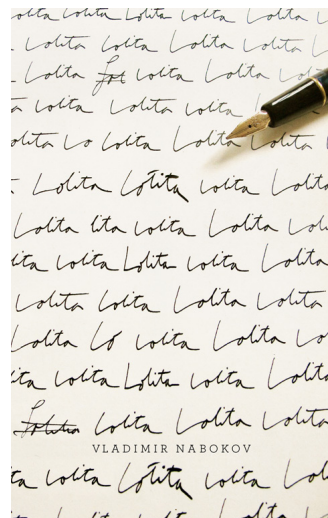


Figure 35. Cover by Gabriele Wilson.

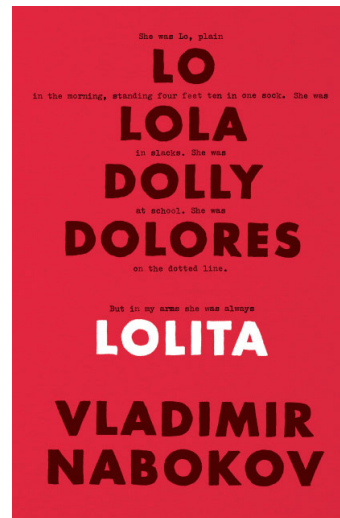


Figure 36. Cover by Jenny Volvoski.



Figure 37. Cover by Barbara deWilde.



Figure 38. Cover by Mark Melnick.

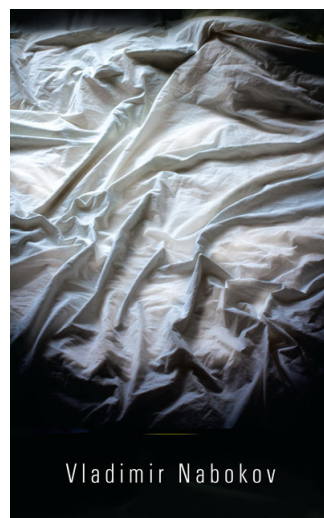


Figure 39. Cover by Jen Wang.



Figure 40. Cover by Jamie Keenan.



Figure 41. Cover by Andy Pressman.



Figure 42. Cover by Ben Wiseman.

While present in some of the published covers, the mood and themes of the novel are more strongly present in this collection. Most of these covers focus on the Humbert/Lolita relationship, specifically its one-sided sexual nature. They don't merely focus on the sexual part, but its one-sidedness and its destructive nature. They remind us that despite it being an 'intimate' relationship, Humbert is the only one that gets pleasure from it and in reality cares or knows very little about the other partner. Aside from the dramatic and tragic undertones of the story there are a few covers that do depict the lighter and sometimes comic side of the novel.

In keeping with the tradition of published Lolita covers, several of these covers feature a title-only rendition, but are neither neutral nor do they avoid the nature of the novel. These covers are often entwined pictorial elements in the title and carefully use typography that denotes the themes or mood of the novel. Several also use an excerpt from the novel as to show off the lyrical and poetic nature of Nabokov's writing.

In comparison to the published covers, these covers have a deeper understanding of the novel and portray the characters more deeply than its counterpart. These covers demonstrate a deeper understanding by simply not dwelling on the sexual nature of the relationship.

Conceptually there is more variety in this collection, as well as more aesthetically pleasing covers than most of the covers in Zimmer's collection. However, some of these covers would never function as actual book covers, for either being too conceptual or for being too provocative for both the publishers and most readers. Some of the more provocative covers include John Fullbrook's cover, and Mark Melnick.

Chapter 3 — the Project

3.1 Editorial Brief

The purpose of this Project is to repack the Portuguese book collection Biblioteca Básica. The collection consisted of 100 books that had a wide variety of fiction both classical and contemporary, as well as educational and instructive titles.

When it was introduced in the 70's, it became a popular item for Portuguese readers selling out the 50000 copies of the first two titles the day they were launched.

In total it sold out 15 million copies in its print run, and today it is still a popular item in flea markets and portuguese antique book shops. I chose to redo this book collection mainly to introduce the collection to a newer generation of readers. The intended audience for this collection will be the general reading public. This collection is a reminder of the original book series, celebrating it with a selection of the books. Since the collection has a reduced number of titles, it will be called Seleção Básica.

3.2 Graphic Design Brief

The original design of the series consisted of an abstract illustration which was colour-coded based on the book genre: red and green for Portuguese authors, cyan and green for foreign authors, gold and violet for plays and pink and orange for educational titles. As such, each genre will retain the same colour coding. The educational titles will be omitted from the series since they are outdated.

For the cover I decided to use illustration as the key visual element of each cover. The decision to use illustration over photography and typography is because it is the approach I'm most comfortable with. These images use the limited the colour palette of the original collection.

The Book List

The book collection Seleção Básica has 12 titles from the 100 titles of the original collection. The titles included in this new version are the following:

1. *A Aparição* – Vergílio Ferreira
2. *Menina e Moça* – Bernadim Ribeiro
3. *O Retrato de Dorian Gray*– Oscar Wilde
4. *Quatro Prisões Debaixo das Armas* – Vitorino Nemésio
5. *Ajax, Antígona, Rei Édipo* – Sofócles
6. *A Queda* – Albert Camus
7. *A Brusca* – Agustina Bessa-Luís
8. *O Jogador* – Fiodor Dostoievski
9. *Três Autos e Uma Farsa* – Gil Vicente
10. *Crónicas e Cartas* – Eça Queirós
11. *Maria Moisés* – Camilo Castelo Branco
12. *Pigmalião* – Bernard Shaw

3.3 Development

In this section, I will focus on the development of the book series, the decisions and tasks that I performed during its development.

These tasks included general research, defining a brief, specific research for each book, creating the illustrations, developing the cover, picking and composing the typeface, defining the structure of the front cover, creating the full book jacket and printing the final version.

Research

Before defining the brief and even the series I was going to develop, I did image research to understand the market as well understand how to create a book series. It helped to understand the best way of representing a book series whether through a concept, colour palette, style. Several of the book series that

served as inspiration include Penguin Great Ideas, covers designed by Mario Degrada and covers by Sebastião Rodrigues and Victor Palla.

Illustration

Early sketches of each book consist of key words and notes about the book and the author. For each book, I created thumbnails to get a general idea of which ideas worked and which didn't. In these earlier sketches that I tried to literally represent an element from each title, and often used clichéd images associated with each title. After developing other ideas and proposals, I tried to create a more figurative image for each novel.



Figure 43. Titles from Greats Ideas Volume III and Mario Degrada's covers.

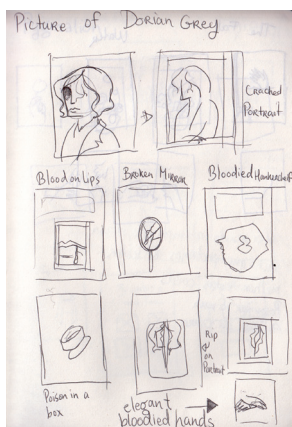


Figure 44. Thumbnails developed for Retrato de Dorian Gray.



Figure 45. Early Colour studies of Quatro Prisão Debaixo das Armas.



Figure 46. *Quatro Prisões Debaixo das Armas* is a series of short stories that take place in the Azores islands. The fish in the fishing net represents the rural life of the characters in the book.



Figure 47. The abstract illustration on the cover of *A Queda* portrays both the descent of the protagonist and the depth of the ocean.



Figure 48. The doves' wing represents the innocence and the concept of love in *Menina e Moça*.

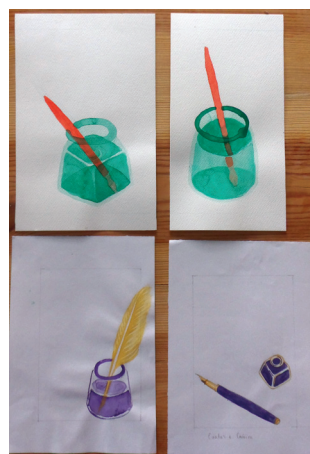


Figure 49. *Crônicas e Cartas* is a collection of short stories and letters written by Eça de Queirós when the author lived England and in France. The dip pen and ink jar reflect on the act of writing.



Figure 50. The flower bed portrayed on the cover of *Pigmalião* is a reference to the flower girl in the novel.



Figure 51. The cover of *Maria Moisés* is a direct reference to how the protagonist is found in a basket on the water.



Figure 52. The cigarette holder, ashtray and billowing smoke reflect on the decadent nature of Dorian Gray.



Figure 53. A Brusca is a collection of short stories. The cover is a reference to the first short story, alluding to the decay of a house.

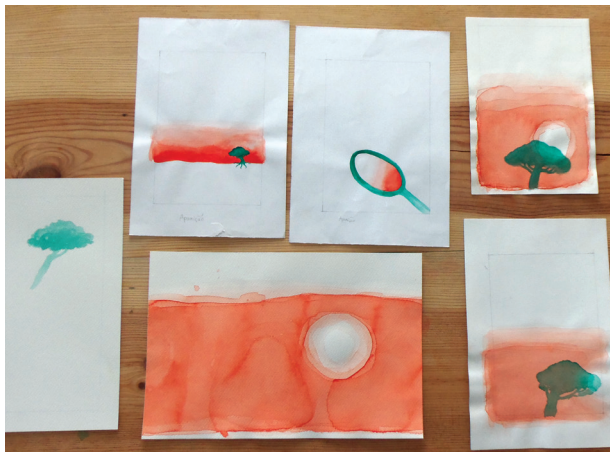


Figure 54. The lone tree silhouetted on a sunset represents both the setting of the book (in the Alentejo) and the theme about how the protagonist found his revelation.



Figure 55. The sword on the cover of Ajax Antígona Rei Édipo recalls the theme of demise a common element in greek tragedies.



Figure 56. The flames on the cover of Três Autos e Uma Farsa represent the theme of heaven and hell present in all four plays.



Figure 57. The gambling chips on the cover is a reference to the gambling in the novel.

Once I defined the element that I wanted to use on each cover, I started to create several more detailed studies. Just as the content of each illustration evolved, so did the techniques I used. In the first sketches, I used highly saturated colours that masked the transparent qualities of watercolours. In later versions, I opted for an overlaying watercolour technique that got more saturated with each layer. I also increased the size of several of the elements from the previous drafts, simplified and cropped each composition in an almost abstract nature.

Besides creating an illustration for the cover, I also created a series of miniature watercolours for the spine to serve as a visual reminder when the books are on a bookstand as well as complement the cover illustration.

Since most of the images were wavy, I had decided to scan the images with a flatbed scanner. While the scanner did a good job capturing the delicate texture of the watercolours, I had to individually adjust the images in Photoshop and remove unwanted artefacts.

Typography

At the beginning of this project, my knowledge of typography was very limited. As such, when choosing a font I used a trial and error approach. In my first proposals, I used fonts I had heard of, and used them on the cover so that they occupied most of the white space on the cover. These proposals were clumsy and jarring and overpowered the illustration on the cover, when it was supposed to compliment it.

After many jarring compositions, I looked for a typography resource. I ended up using the book *Geometry of Type* because of its extending list of contemporary fonts. While in previous experiments I used more than one font for the information the cover and much to my dismay, did not work. I decided it was best to select just one font for the information. I ended up choosing *Neue Haas Grotesk*, a modern revival of *Helvetica* because of its neutral letterforms that easily adapted to each cover.



Figure 58. Some of the first trial and error covers.



Figure 59. Text pairing studies and text composition studies.

Developing the cover

After selecting the font, I started experimenting with the type composition, taking into consideration size, colour, placement, weight and case of the text. At the end of the experiment, I finally chose a general composition settled on the colour of the title and the author. With this cover, I was able to use the white space to create a clean design and balance the hierarchy between the text and the image.

For the jacket, I left both the back cover and the spine all white, continuing with the idea from the front cover. The text on the spine was centred and retained the colour coding of the front. The text's size was set at 16 pts and 12 pts was placed to read from head to foot. At the top of the spine, the number of the title was set in white over a grey box that continued onto the front cover. At the bottom was the thumbnail of each book.

For the cover, I used a 240 grms cream coloured Muken paper to simulate the texture and the colour of watercolour paper.

Alternate version

While developing the 'white cover', I developed an alternate version that consisted of a grey box with the text inside. The title continued in black but the author was in white.

The final 'box variant' had the grey box extend towards the limits of the cover, either on the right or the left. The author was reduced to 14 pts, while the title was reduced to 16 pts. The size of the box was also reduced.



Figure 60. Several stages of the grey box cover.

Final version

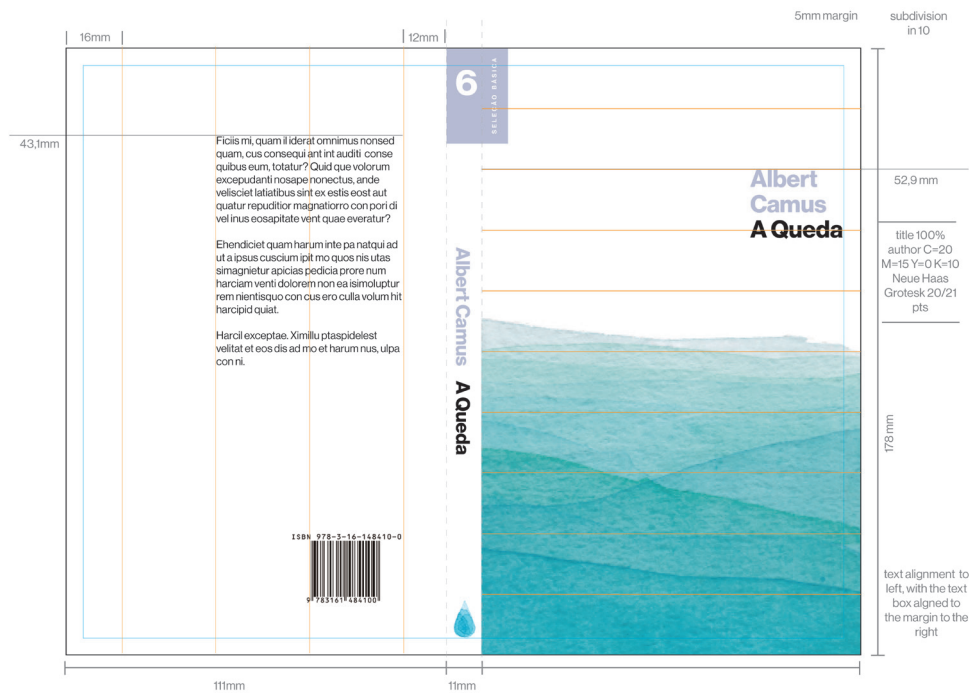


Figure 61. The cover layout with several notes on position, size, and colour of the elements.

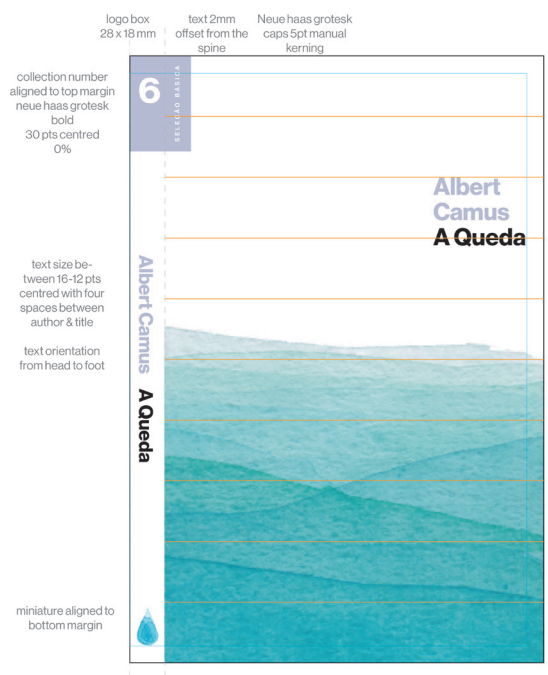


Figure 62. Specifications for the spine and the collection logo.

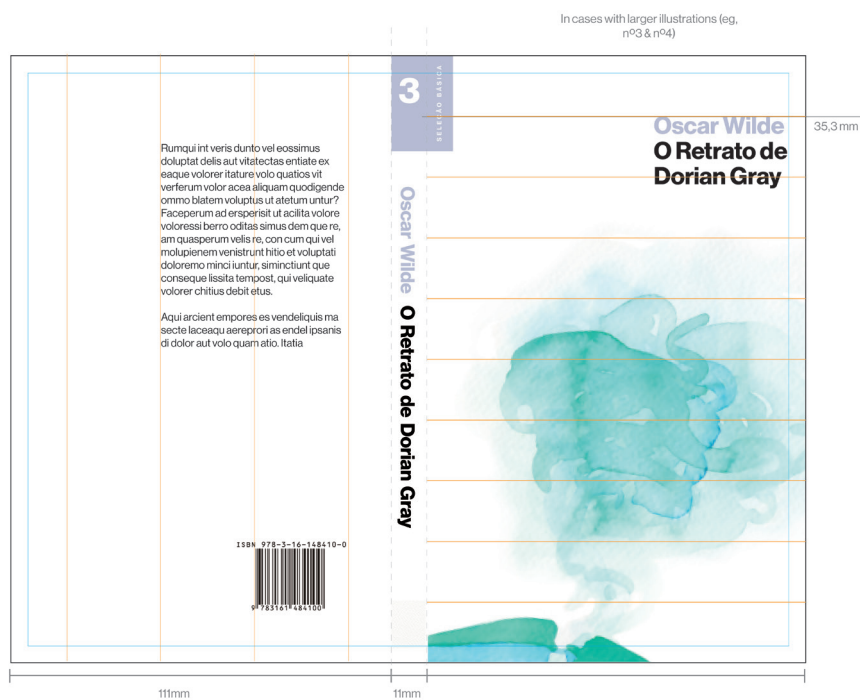


Figure 63. Alternate layout for titles nº 3 and 4.



Figure 64. Print tests of all the titles in comparison with the original collection.



Figure 65. Detail of the spines.



Figure 66. Detail of the watercolour miniatures on each title.

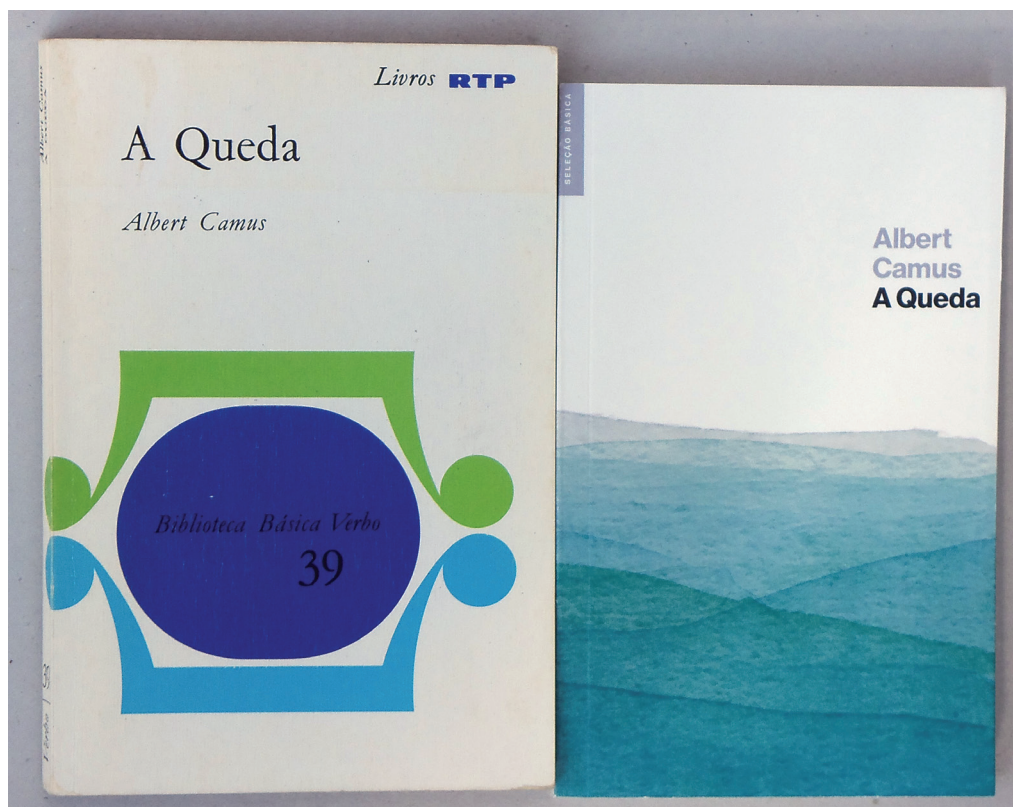


Figure 67. Comparison of the printed and bound dummy with the original title from the collection.

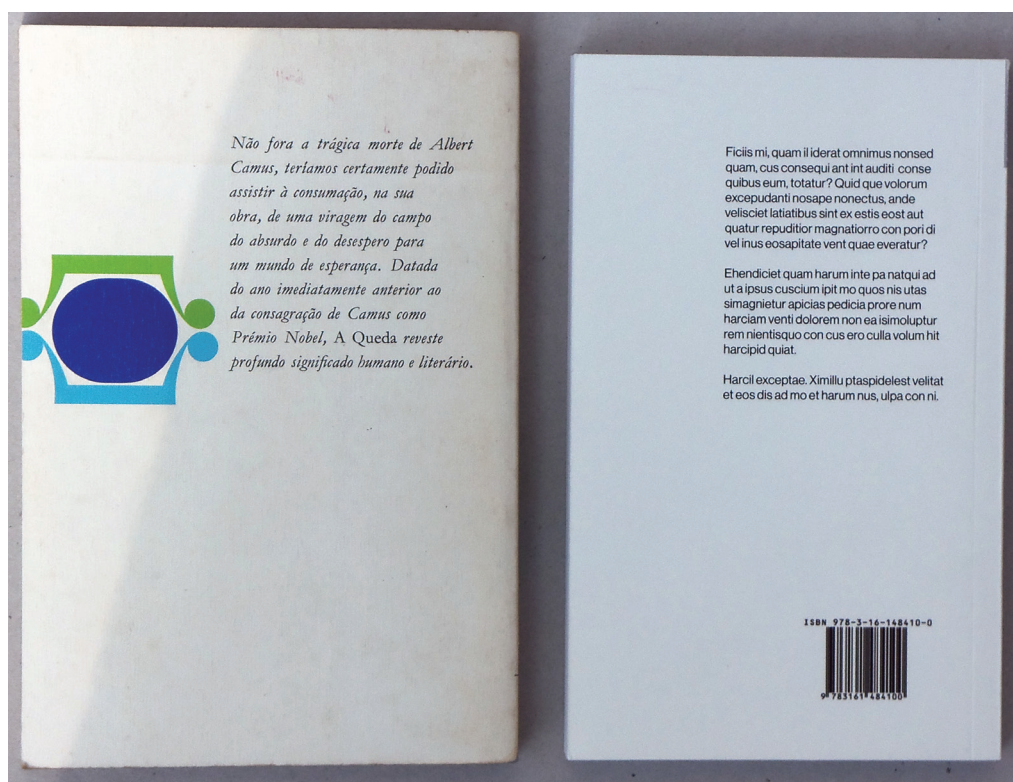


Figure 68. Comparison between the back covers.

Conclusion

Considering the study this report has documented, cover design is a necessary measure that every publisher should take into consideration. It helps create an image for the book itself, while being an object of publicity. In the end, it is required considering the personal tastes of the buyer, which varies from person to person and changes along the years.

The Penguin study helped understand the evolution of a publisher and its need to adapt to the market not only to make it profitable but also desirable. Since the continuing growth of the company, Penguin uses grids for several series, such as penguin classics and penguin modern classics to reconcile with the large series list in a short period of time.

Like Penguin, the Lolita covers have evolved and continue to evolve since the 'type only' approach that was dominant in the first ten years of its publication. Nevertheless, there are still badly designed covers of Lolita, but the overall appearance of the book has greatly improved. There are many factors that have contributed to this, most likely the years of studies dedicated to the understanding of the novel, and a greater awareness of the book. It may also be due to the designer's growing awareness of the book. Just like graphic design, cover design continues to evolve as does the consciousness of the designers who create covers.

The development of the series has an overall positive outcome, having completed the objectives established in the brief. Though the collection list was short, I was able to create a new identity for each book through illustration and at the same time link them together with the design grid. With a larger book list, I would have had to have compromised the quality of each image and possibly use templates. I enjoyed the experimental approach despite it being an unknown area when I started this project, and enjoyed the freedom to explore it in an academic setting.

The relevance of the book collection that was developed as the main project for this report, is still far from being an accurate example of book design, since cover design tends to depend on the participation of third parties in the publishing industry. I feel that in the time I was given I could have created more proposals, especially a type only approach and the full cover illustration approach, which would have given more variety to the project.

While I don't intend to pursue any further developments in this project in the near future, there is still the prospect of continuing the series, as I only developed 12 titles of the 100 in the series. One suggestion would be to include new contemporary authors that appeared after the original collection, as a way of reinvigorating the collection itself.

Proposing it to a publisher would be another valid option, giving it the chance to be judged by a wider audience. It can also be marketed to Portuguese newspapers and magazines since many of them offer their readers book collections.

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